MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
HELD IN WASHINGTON, D.C.
17 December 1965

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
HELD IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

I. CONVENE, ROOM 7000, INTERIOR DEPARTMENT BUILDING

The second session of the regular monthly meeting of the Commission of Fine Arts was held in the office of the Interior Department Building on 17 December 1965, at 9:30 a.m., with Chairman William Walton presiding.

Present were: William Walton
Gordon Bunshaft
Burnham Kelly
Aline Saarinen
Hideo Sasaki
John Carl Warnecke

Staff: C.H.Atherton, Secretary
Donald Myer, Asst. Secy
Nancee Black, Legislative Asst.
Myra Younker, Editor

NCPC: Arnall Connell

Recorder: Leone M. Vialpando

II. INTERVIEWS

1. General Services Administration, Public Buildings Service

a. U.S. Tax Court-Revised Site and Design (deleted)

b. F.B.I. Building - Revised Design

Mr. Karel Yasko, Public Buildings Service, Messrs. Manny, Gladych, Burgee, Otsugi, architects, attended the meeting during the discussion of this project.

Manny and Gladych demonstrated and explained the two models submitted for comparison of designs for the base of the building. One scheme indicated a solid base with a central entranceway on Pennsylvania Avenue while the other had an open base with gardens, fountains, etc. In the first plan, the first floor was treated as a podium while in the second plan it would appear as an open and suspended tray at the second floor level.

The Commission and the architects preferred to have the base treated as a solid, giving a podium effect to the first floor.

The Secretary prepared a letter to the Administrator, General Services Administration, submitting the Commission's approval of the solid base design.

EXHIBIT A

2. Department of Buildings and Grounds

a. Seaton Elementary School Replacement, 10th and P Streets, N.W.- Proposed Design

Mr. G. A. Purcell, Department of Buildings and Grounds, and representatives of Cassell, Gray and Sulton, architects attended the meeting during the discussion of this project.

Chairman Walton requested Mr. Warnecke to express the members' views on the site and design for this school.

Mr. Warnecke stressed that the Commission is primarily concerned with simplifying the design by consolidating it into three clear rectangular units which would cost less and add space for recreation areas. The connecting corridor with storage space could be simplified and the storage facilities located in the basement.

The Secretary prepared a letter for the Chairman's signature to the Engineer Commissioner for the District of Columbia requesting that the design be simplified and submitting suggestions which should aid the architects in accomplishing this. EXHIBIT B

b. Blow-Pierce Elementary School Replacement, 20th and Gales Streets, N.W. - Proposed Design

Mr. Purcell, Department of Buildings and Grounds, and representatives of Clas, Riggs, Owens and Ramos, architectural firm, attended the meeting during the discussion of this project.

Chairman Walton requested Mr. Bunshaft to express the members' views on the site and design for this school.

Mr. Bunshaft stated that the octagonal element, containing the kindergarten and pre-school rooms should be eliminated and these classes relocated in one of the other wings. Only two elements were necessary and would improve the design. The service area and boiler room should also be relocated to provide more direct street access with less interruption of play areas.

The Secretary prepared a letter for the Chairman's signature to the Engineer Commissioner for the District of Columbia requesting that the site and design be restudied. EXHIBIT C

c. Brent Elementary School Replacement, 3rd and D Streets, S.E.- Proposed Design (added to the order of business)

Mr. Purcell, Department of Buildings and Grounds, attended the meeting during the discussion of this project.

Chairman Walton requested Mr. Bunshaft to express the members' views on the site and design for this school.

Mr. Bunshaft commented on the improvement of the site by reorienting the school toward Folger Park. He stated the roof overhang should be eliminated and the roof line treated as a band on the same plane as the supporting structure. This change would emphasize the bays and simplify the design.

The Secretary prepared a letter for the Chairman's signature to the Engineer Commissioner for the District of Columbia expressing the members' approval of the revised design and request that samples of exterior material be submitted for review. EXHIBIT D

d. Woodson Senior High School, 55th and Eads Streets, N.E.- Revised Design

Mr. Purcell, Department of Buildings and Grounds and representatives of McLeod, Ferrara and Ensign, architectural firm, attended the meeting during the discussion of this project.

Chairman Walton expressed the Commission's appreciation to the architects for submitting several study models which revealed extensive investigation on this project and permitted a detailed review by the Commission.

The architects reported on subsoil investigations that revealed a water level eight feet below the surface. The cost of an underground facility with a single tower above grade would be prohibitive.

The scheme with a cruciform hi-rise element set on a podium and flanked on one side by a low element containing the gymnasium and cafeteria was favored by the Commission and the architects. Although additional funds would be necessary for this construction it would be less expensive than the single tower plan. The members felt the low element could be reduced.

Future expansion was discussed. The members recommended that additional space be planned as a rectangular element to the rear of the podium. The main feature of the design, the cruciform hi-rise element, would remain a prototype for planning schools of greater density.

The Secretary prepared a letter for the Chairman's signature to the Engineer Commissioner of the District of Columbia expressing the members' approval of the cruciform and recommended the low element and techniques for future expansion. EXHIBIT E

e. Georgetown University Medical Center, 3800 Reservoir Road, N.W., O.G. 66-124 - Proposed Parking Facilities

Mr. Theodore F. Mariani, architect, attended the meeting for this project.

Chairman Walton requested Mr. Sasaki to express the Commission's view on the plan for parking facilities at Georgetown University.

Mr. Sasaki stated that only a few spaces for short term parking should be located in front of the building. This would create a more attractive environment at the main entrances and from Reservoir Road. All other parking should be underground. The plan for entrance plazas was an improvement. Landscaping would punctuate these.

Mr. Warnecke remarked that some definition of structure or planting on top of the terraces to screen light shafts and ventilating openings would give interest to the plan.

The members felt that the plan was improved but should be restudied to provide more spaces for underground parking.

The Secretary prepared a letter for the Chairman's signature to the Department of Licenses and Inspections expressing the members' views and requesting further study. (See Appendix 2, 17 December 1965).

The meeting adjourned at 10:55.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles H. Atherton

C. H. Atherton
Secretary

December 27, 1965

Dear Mr. Knott:

At its meeting on 17 December 1965, the Commission of Fine Arts considered revised designs for the proposed Federal Bureau of Investigation Building.

The architects presented this Commission two alternate schemes for the base on the Pennsylvania Avenue side. One of the studies reflected efforts to have an open feeling along the Avenue and one had a solid base with a single opening in the center of the Avenue face. The solid face, which reflects earlier studies was the one favored.

We look forward to seeing further studies as the facade and structural details are developed.

Sincerely yours,

William Walton

William Walton
Chairman

Honorable Lawson B. Knott, Jr.
Administrator
General Services Administration
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT A

December 27, 1965

Dear General Duke:

At its meeting on December 16, 1965, the Commission of Fine Arts considered designs for the Seaton Elementary School Replacement at 10th and P Streets, N. W.

The Commission recommends further study along the present lines, but with some refinement given to the massing of various elements. The entry and connecting link should be treated as a single low element. The kindergarten and pre-school classrooms should be included in a single element with no other functions. The all-purpose room and kitchen should be a single element with one mass and a uniform roof level. The architect should consider moving the building a bit closer to Rhode Island Avenue and eliminating some of the large concrete plaza in front of the school. Some of the utility elements may be moved to the basement area.

We have asked the staff to work closely with you and the architect in this further study. Should the refinements be made prior to the next Commission meeting on 18 and 19 January 1966 we will be happy to view this project at that time.

Sincerely yours,

William Walton

William Walton
Chairman

Brigadier General C. M. Duke
Engineer Commissioner for
the District of Columbia
District Building
Washington, D. C. 20004

EXHIBIT B

December 27, 1965

Dear General Duke:

At its meeting on 16 December 1965, the Commission of Fine Arts considered the proposed design for the Blow-Pierce Elementary School Replacement at 20th and Gales Streets, N.E.

The Commission felt that the architects should give the over-all massing of the school further study. They felt that the mass of the all-purpose wing and the kindergarten and pre-school wings as equal elements, one octagonal and one rectangular, was quite weak. They also recommended that the service elements of the school be more isolated from the small children's play areas.

We have asked the staff to work closely with you and the architects in this new study. In the event that it is prepared prior to the Commission's next meeting on 18 and 19 January, we would be happy to view it at that time.

Sincerely yours,

William Walton

William Walton
Chairman

Brigadier General C. M. Duke
Engineer Commissioner for
the District of Columbia
District Building
Washington, D. C. 20004

EXHIBIT C

December 27, 1965

Dear General Duke:

At its meeting on the 16th of December, 1965, the Commission of Fine Arts considered the proposed designs for the Brent Elementary School Replacement at 3rd and D Streets, S.E.

The Commission was in favor of the design as revised. The general massing with the main classroom block facing the park is good. The facade details require some further modification. We recommend that solid panels between the classroom windows be made of red brick and that samples be submitted to us. Of the several alternate column systems presented we favor the simple rectangular pier, but feel that it should be larger in cross section. Rather than having the roof overhang as shown to us, we recommend that the roof element and the beam on top of the columns be given a similar treatment to read as broad beams or bands, running the entire length of the building without breaks. A small thin roof may project over the classroom window bays below the main roof band.

Sincerely yours,

William Walton

William Walton
Chairman

Brigadier General C. M. Duke
Engineer Commissioner for
the District of Columbia
District Building
Washington, D. C. 20004

EXHIBIT D

December 27, 1965

Dear General Duke:

At its meeting on the 16th of December 1965, the Commission of Fine Arts considered the proposed designs for the Woodson Senior High School at 55th and Eads Streets, N. E.

The Commission was quite impressed with the extent of study that the architects had put into the designing of this building since our last meeting on November 17, 1965.

The architects proposed several alternate designs and of these the Commission favored the one which placed the cruciform hi-rise element on the front side of a low platform and the gymnasium and cafeteria in a low element on the other side of the platform. We felt that the low element could be further reduced in height and that the parking lot could be placed on the side, rather than to the rear of the school. The Commission recommends that further expansion of the school be made in the rear with the form of a rectangular block of classrooms, rather than adding stories to the top of the cruciform unit.

Sincerely yours,

William Walton

William Walton
Chairman

Brigadier General C. M. Duke
Engineer Commissioner for
the District of Columbia
District Building
Washington, D. C. 20004

EXHIBIT E

MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
17 December 1965

AM
9:30 I. CONVENE, ROOM 7000, INTERIOR DEPARTMENT BUILDING

II. INTERVIEWS

9:35 1. General Services Administration, Public Buildings Service

a. U.S. Tax Court - Revised Site and Design

(Mr. Karel Yasko, Public Buildings Service; Mr. J. Rowland Snyder, Public Buildings Service; Mr. Victor Lundy, Mr. William Lyles, architects)

b. F.B.I. Building - Revised Design

(Mr. Yasko; Mr. Snyder; Mr. Carter Manny, Mr. Stan Gladych, Mr. John Burgee, Mr. Mitsuru Otsugi, architects)

10:45 2. District of Columbia Government, Department of Buildings and Grounds

a. Seaton Elementary School Replacement, 10th and P Sts., N.W. - Proposed Design

(Mr. G.A. Purcell, Liaison Officer, D.C. Dept. of Bldgs. and Grounds; representative of Cassell, Gray and Sulton, architects)

b. Blow-Pierce Elementary School Replacement, 20th and Gales Sts., N.W. - Proposed Design

(Mr. Purcell; representative of Clas, Riggs, Owens and Ramos, architects)

c. Woodson Senior High School, 55th and Eads Sts., N.E. - Revised Design

(Mr. Purcell; representative of McLeod, Ferrara and Ensign, architects)